

Northeast (NE) Multispecies Closed Area Regulations



Unless otherwise noted, the regulations described below apply to fishing vessels issued valid Federal fishing permits or any vessel fishing in Federal waters. (See 50 CFR § 648.4 for Federal fishing permit requirements.) This information sheet is only a summary of applicable fishing regulations and is not a substitute for the actual regulations which can be found at 50 CFR Part 648.

GULF OF MAINE (GOM) ROLLING CLOSURE AREAS AND GEORGES BANK (GB) SEASONAL CLOSURE AREAS:

The GOM Rolling Closure Areas and the GB Seasonal Area described below, unless further restricted under the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Closure Areas, are closed to all fishing vessels with the following exemptions: Vessels that do not have a Federal Northeast (NE) multispecies permit and are fishing exclusively in state waters; charter, party or recreational vessels; and vessels fishing with spears, rakes, diving gear, cast nets, tongs, harpoons, weirs, dip nets, stop nets, pound nets, pots and traps, purse seines, mid-water trawls, surf clam/quahog dredge gear, pelagic hook and line, pelagic longlines, single pelagic gillnets, shrimp trawls (with properly configured grates), and sea scallop dredge gear (see conditions under Georges Bank Seasonal Closure Area).

Charter and party vessels may fish in the GOM Rolling Closure Area provided they have a Letter of Authorization from the Regional Administrator to enter or fish in these areas. A letter of authorization is valid from the date of enrollment through the duration or the closure of three months duration, whichever is greater, and is available by calling the Permit Office at 978-281-9278.

GULF OF MAINE SEASONAL ROLLING CLOSURE AREAS

< Rolling Closure Area I - Closed March 1 through March 31:

Point	N. Latitude	W. Longitude
GM3	42°00'	(1)
GM5	42°00'	68°30'
GM6	42°30'	68°30'
GM23	42°30'	70°00'

1 Cape Cod shoreline on the Atlantic Ocean.

< Rolling Closure Area II - Closed April 1 through April 30:

Point	N. Latitude	W. Longitude
GM1	42°00'	(1)
GM2	42°00'	(2)
GM3	42°00'	(3)
GM5	42°00'	68°30'

GM13	43°00'	68°30'
GM9	43°00'	(4)

1 Massachusetts shoreline.
 2 Cape Cod shoreline on Cape Cod Bay.
 3 Cape Cod shoreline on the Atlantic Ocean.
 4 New Hampshire shoreline.

< **Rolling Closure Area III - Closed May 1 through May 31:**

Point	N. Latitude	W. Longitude
GM1	42°00'	(1)
GM2	42°00'	(2)
GM3	42°00'	(3)
GM4	42°00'	70°00'
GM23	42°30'	70°00'
GM6	42°30'	68°30'
GM14	43°30'	68°30'
GM10	43°30'	(4)

1 Massachusetts shoreline.
 2 Cape Cod shoreline on Cape Cod Bay.
 3 Cape Cod shoreline on the Atlantic Ocean.
 4 Maine shoreline.

< **Rolling Closure Area IV - Closed June 1 through June 30:**

Point	N. Latitude	W. Longitude
GM9	42°30'	(1)
GM23	42°30'	70°00'
GM17	43°30'	70°00'
GM19	43°30'	67°32' or (2)
GM20	44°00'	67°21' or (2)
GM21	44°00'	69°00'
GM22	(3)	69°00'

1 Massachusetts shoreline.
 2 U.S. - Canada maritime boundary.
 3 Maine shoreline.

< **Rolling Closure Area V - Closed October 1 through November 30:***

Point	N. Latitude	W. Longitude
GM1	42°00'	(1)
GM2	42°00'	(2)
GM3	42°00'	(3)
GM4	42°00'	70°00'
GM8	42°30'	70°00'
GM9	42°30'	(1)

1 Massachusetts shoreline.
 2 Cape Cod shoreline on Cape Cod Bay.
 3 Cape Cod shoreline on the Atlantic Ocean.

*Raised Footrope Trawl Whiting Fishery are exempt from Rolling Closure Area V.

GB SEASONAL CLOSURE AREA

For the purposes of the GB Seasonal Closure Area only, vessels fishing with scallop dredge gear when fishing under a scallop DAS or when fishing in the Scallop Dredge Fishery Exemption Area are exempt, provided that the vessel use an 8-inch twine top and complies with other applicable NE multispecies possession limits. The area is as follows:

< **Georges Bank Seasonal Closure Area - Closed May 1 through May 31:**

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
GB1	42°00'	(1)
GB2	42°00'	68°30'
GB3	42°20'	68°30'
GB4	42°20'	67°20'
GB5	41°30'	67°20'
CL1	41°30'	69°23'
CL2	40°45'	68°45'
CL3	40°45'	68°30'
GB6	40°30'	68°30'
GB7	40°30'	69°00'
G10	40°50'	69°00'
GB8	40°50'	69°30'
GB9	41°00'	69°30'
GB10	41°00'	70°00'
G12	(1)	70°00'

1 Northward to its intersection with the shoreline of Mainland Massachusetts.

YEAR-ROUND GROUND FISH CLOSURE AREAS- Gulf of Maine (GOM)

The Western GOM and Cashes Ledge Closure areas are closed year-round to all fishing vessels with the following exemptions: Charter, party (Charter and party vessels must have a Letter of Authorization from the Regional Administrator to enter or fish in this area) or recreational vessels; and vessels fishing with spears, rakes, diving gear, cast nets, tongs, harpoons, weirs, dip nets, stop nets, pound nets, pots and traps, purse seines, mid-water trawls, surf clam/quahog dredge gear, pelagic hook and line, pelagic longlines, single pelagic gillnets, and shrimp trawls (with properly configured grates). A Charter/Party Letter of Authorization is valid from the date of enrollment until the end of the fishing year and is available by calling the Permit Office at 978-281-9278.

< **Western GOM Area Closure**

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
WGM1	42°15'	70°15'
WGM2	42°15'	69°55'
WGM3	43°15'	69°55'
WGM4	43°15'	70°15'
WGM1	42°15'	70°15'

< **Cashes Ledge Closure Area**

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
CL1	43°07'	69°02'
CL2	42°49.5'	68°46'
CL3	42°46.5'	68°50.5'
CL4	42°43.5'	68°58.5'
CL5	42°42.5'	69°17.5'
CL6	42°49.5'	69°26'
CL1	43°07'	69°02'

YEAR ROUND CLOSURE AREAS- GB and Southern New England

Closed Area I - Closed Area I, unless further restricted under the EFH Closure Areas, is closed year-round to all fishing vessels, with the following exceptions: Vessels fishing with or using pot gear designed to take lobsters or hagfish, pelagic hook and line gear, pelagic longline gear, harpoon gear, tuna purse seine, pelagic mid-water trawl gear, and tuna purse seine gear.

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
CI1	41°30'	69°23'
CI2	40°45'	68°45'
CI3	40°45'	68°30'
CI4	41°30'	68°30'
CI1	41°30'	69°23'

Closed Area II (CA II) - CA II, unless further restricted under the EFH Closure Areas, is closed year-round to all fishing vessels, with the following exceptions: Vessels fishing with or using pot gear designed to take lobsters or hagfish, pelagic hook and line gear, pelagic longline gear, harpoon gear, tuna purse seine outside the portion of CA II known as the Habitat of Particular Concern, Pelagic mid-water trawl gear, and vessels fishing in the CA II Yellowtail Flounder Special Access Program (refer to Information Sheet #16).

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
CII1	41°00'	67°20'
CII2	41°00'	66°35.8'
G5	41°18.6'	66°24.8' (the U.S.- Canada Maritime Boundary)
CII3	42°22'	67°20' (the U.S.- Canada Maritime Boundary)
CII1	41°00'	67°20'

Nantucket Lightship Closed Area - Nantucket Lightship Closed Area, unless further restricted under the EFH Closure Areas, is closed year-round to all fishing vessels, with the following exceptions: Vessels fishing with or using pot gear designed to take lobsters or hagfish, pelagic hook and line gear, pelagic longline gear, tuna purse seine, harpoon gear, pelagic mid-water trawl gear, surf clam/quahog dredge gear, and charter/party or recreational vessels. Charter and party vessels must have a letter of authorization from the Regional Administrator to enter or fish in this area. A letter of authorization may be obtained by calling the Permit Office at 978-281-9278.

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
G10	40°50'	69°00'
CN1	40°20'	69°00'
CN2	40°20'	70°20'
CN3	40°50'	70°20'
G10	40°50'	69°00'

YEAR-ROUND ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT (EFH) CLOSURES:

EFH Closure Areas are closed year-round to all bottom-tending mobile gears. Bottom tending mobile gear is defined as the following: Gear in contact with the ocean bottom, and towed from a vessel, which is moved through the water during fishing in order to capture fish, and includes otter trawls, beam trawls, hydraulic dredges, non-hydraulic dredges, and seines (with the exception of a purse seine).

< Western GOM Habitat Closure Area

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
WGM4	43°15'	70°15'
WGM1	42°15'	70°15'
WGM5	42°15'	70°00'
WGM6	43°15'	70°00'
WGM4	43°15'	70°15'

< **Jeffery's Bank Habitat Closure Area**

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
JB1	43°40'	68°50'
JB2	43°40'	68°40'
JB3	43°20'	68°40'
JB4	43°20'	68°50'
JB1	43°40'	68°50'

< **Closed Area I North Habitat Closure Area**

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
CI1	41°30'	69°23'
CI4	41°30'	68°30'
CIH1	41°26'	68°30'
CIH2	41°04'	69°01'
CI1	41°30'	69°23'

< **Closed Area I South Habitat Closure Area**

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
CIH3	40°55'	68°53'
CIH4	40°58'	68°30'
CI3	40°45'	68°30'
CI2	40°45'	68°45'
CIH3	40°55'	68°53'

< **Closed Area II Habitat Closure Area**

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
CIH1	42°00'	67°20'
CIH2	42°00'	67°00'
CIH3	41°40'	66°43'
CIH4	41°40'	67°20'
CIH1	42°00'	67°20'

< **Nantucket Lightship Habitat Closure Area**

<u>Point</u>	<u>N. Latitude</u>	<u>W. Longitude</u>
NLH1	41°10'	70°00'
NLH2	41°10'	69°50'
NLH3	40°50'	69°30'
NLH4	40°20'	69°30'

NLH5	40°20'	70°00'
NLH1	41°10'	70°00'

TRANSITING REGULATIONS

- < **NE Multispecies GOM Rolling Closure Areas, GB Seasonal Closure Area, Western GOM Closure Area, Cashes Ledge Closure Area, Nantucket Lightship Closed Area, Closed Area I, and the EFH Closure Areas (unless otherwise prohibited):** Vessels may transit these areas during the closure periods, provided that the gear is stowed in accordance with the regulations summarized below.
- < **Closed Area II:** Vessels may not transit Closed Area II except for valid safety reasons, provided the operator has determined that there is a compelling safety reason and that fishing gear is stowed in accordance with the regulations summarized below.

GEAR STOWAGE REQUIREMENTS

To legally stow gear, a vessel must meet one or more of the following requirements:

Trawl Gear:

- ***A net stowed below deck provided:*** It is located below the main working deck from which the net is deployed and retrieved; the towing wires, including the leg wires, are detached from the net; and it is fan-folded (flaked) and bound around its circumference.
- or**
- ***A net stowed and lashed down on deck, provided:*** It is fan-folded (flaked) and bound around its circumference; it is securely fastened to the deck or rail of the vessel; and the towing wires, including the leg wires, are detached from the net.
- or**
- ***On-reel stowage for vessels transiting the GOM Rolling Closure Areas and the GB Seasonal Closure Area -*** A net that is on a reel and is covered and secured, provided: the entire surface of the net is covered with canvas or other similar opaque material that is securely bound; the towing wires are detached from the doors; and no containment rope, codend tripping device, or other mechanism to close off the codend is attached to the codend.
- or**
- ***On-reel stowage for vessels transiting the Western GOM Closure Area, Cashes Ledge Closure Area, Closed Area I, Closed Area II, and the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area -*** A net that is on a reel and is covered and secured, provided: the entire surface of the net is covered with canvas or other similar opaque material that is securely bound; the towing wires are detached from the net; and the codend is removed and stored below deck.
- or**
- ***Nets that are secured in a manner authorized in writing by the Regional Administrator.***

Scallop Dredges:

- The towing wire is detached from the scallop dredge, the towing wire is reeled up onto the winch, and the dredge is secured and covered so that it is rendered unusable for fishing.

Hook Gear: (other than pelagic)

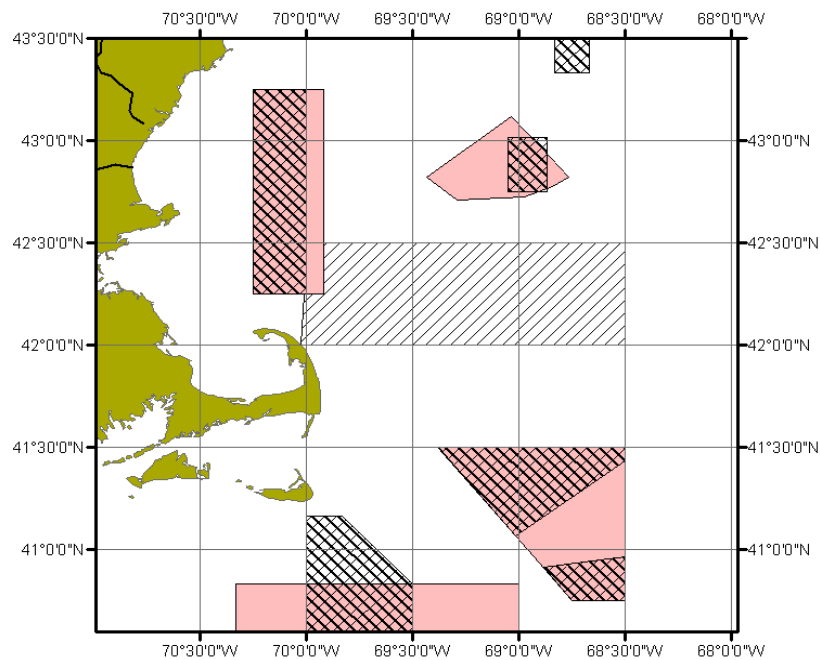
- All anchors and buoys are secured and all hook gear, including jigging machines, is covered.

Sink Gillnet Gear:

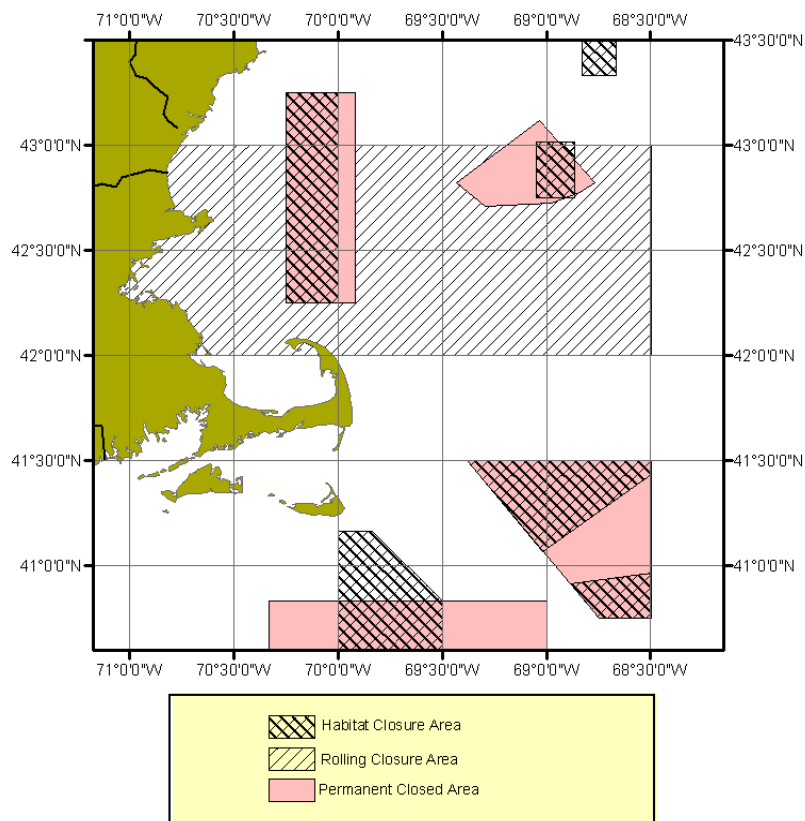
- All nets are covered with canvas or other similar material and lashed or otherwise securely fastened to the deck or rail, and all buoys larger than 6 inches (15.24 cm) in diameter, high flyers, and anchors are disconnected.

(click images for larger view)

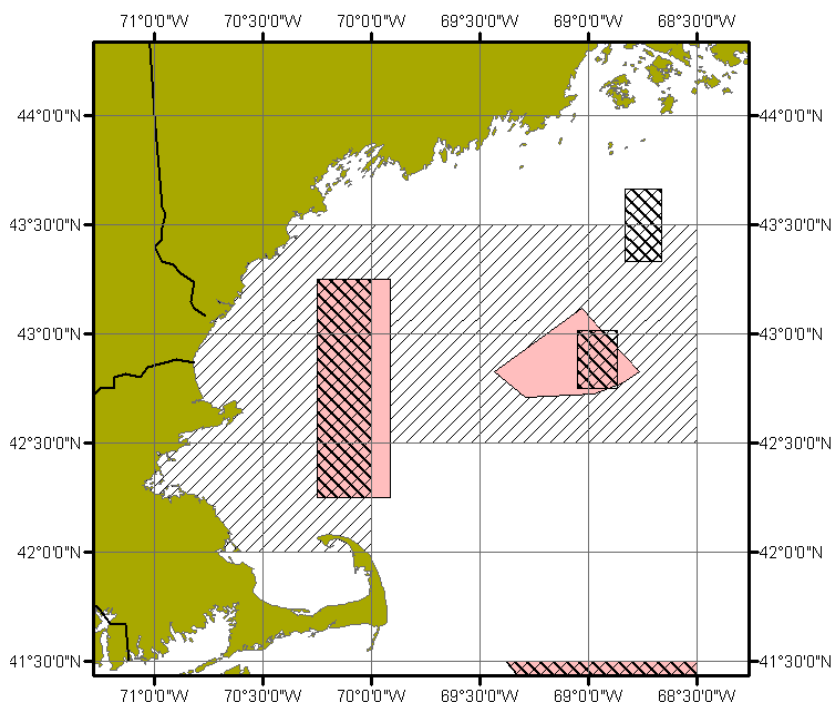
Gulf of Maine Rolling Closure Area I



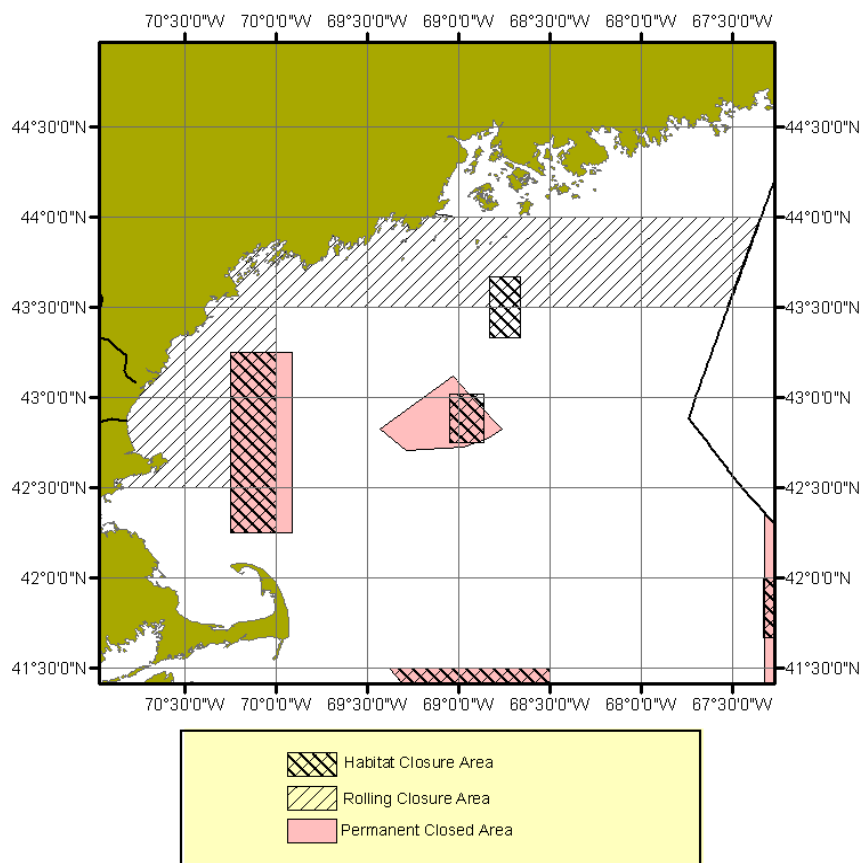
Gulf of Maine Rolling Closure Area II



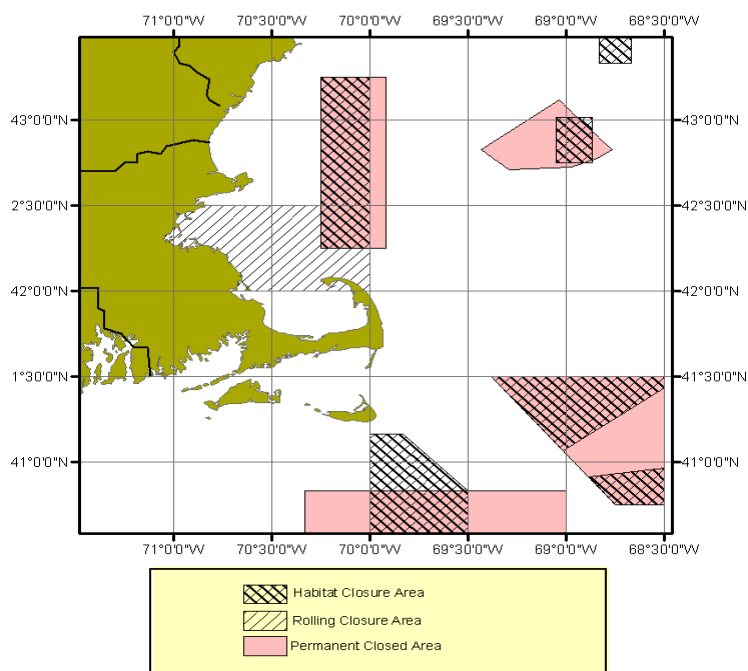
Gulf of Maine Rolling Closure Area III



Gulf of Maine Rolling Closure Area IV

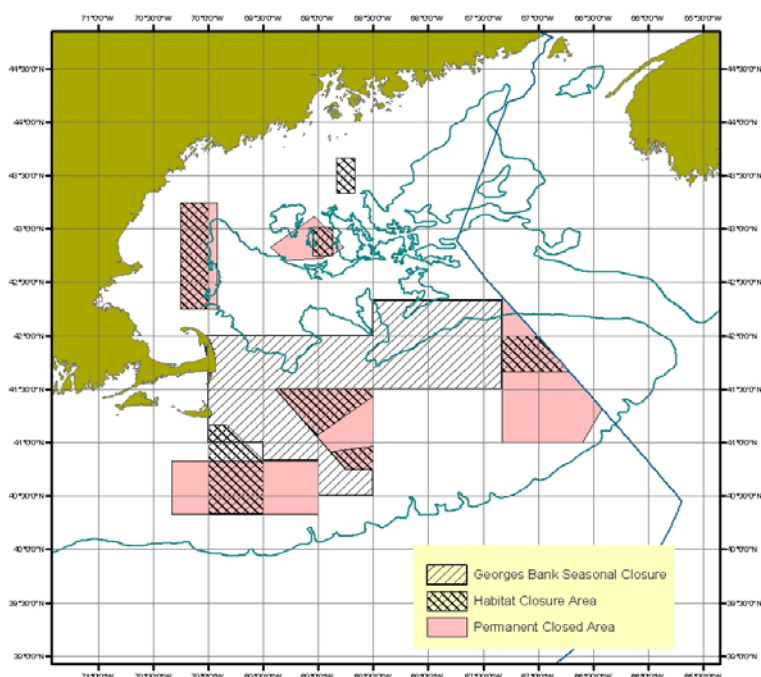


Gulf of Maine Rolling Closure Area V



Georges Bank Seasonal Closure Area

May 1 - May 31



This is a simplified summary of the measures in effect under the NE Multispecies Fishery Management Plan. You should also get a copy of the official rules as published in the [Federal Register](#).